

Amendments to the Claims

1. (Currently amended) In a meter that measures the usage of a utility commodity and has a base and a removable cover, a system that replaces said removable cover comprising

(A) a replacement cover that fits onto said base in the same manner as said removable cover, said replacement cover having an extension;

(B) a usage reader inside said replacement cover directly attached to said extension that obtains information on the amount of said utility that is used without making an electrical or mechanical connection to said meter;

(C) an automatic meter reader inside and attached to said extension, which comprises a microprocessor for storing information and calculating charges and a transmitter for transmitting information to a remote receiver; ~~and~~

(D) means for transferring information from said usage reader to said automatic meter reader; and

(E) a transmitter for transferring information from said automatic meter reader to a remote receiver.

2. (Currently amended) A system according to Claim 1 ~~wherein said automatic meter reader is outside of said replacement cover~~ mounted on the base of an existing operating meter.

3. (Currently amended) A system according to Claim 2 ~~wherein said means is wires that pass through an aperture in said replacement cover~~ 1 mounted on the base of a

new meter.

4. (Currently amended) A system according to Claim 2 1 wherein ~~said means is a wireless connection between said usage reader and said automatic meter reader~~ said replacement cover is attachable to said base without shutting off power to said meter.

5. (Currently amended) A system according to Claim 1 wherein ~~said automatic meter reader is inside said replacement~~ base is cylindrical and said replacement cover is attachable by rotating it relative to said base.

6. (Currently amended) A system according to Claim 5 1 wherein said replacement cover is ~~laterally extended to house said automatic meter reader~~ made of glass or clear plastic.

7. (Currently amended) A system according to Claim 1 wherein said transmitter transmits information from said automatic meter reader through a telephone line to said remote receiver.

8. (Original) A system according to Claim 1 wherein said utility is electric power.

9. (Currently amended) A system according to Claim 1 wherein ~~said removable cover is removed by turning it~~ extension extends laterally from said cover and houses said usage reader and said automatic meter reader.

10. (Currently amended) A system according to Claim 4 9 wherein ~~said cover is integrally molded from clear plastic or glass~~ extension has a first plug for receiving power and a second plug for transmitting and receiving information.

11. (Original) A system according to Claim 1 wherein said meter has a meter wheel,

the angular velocity of which is proportional to the usage of said utility commodity.

12. (Original) A system according to Claim 11 wherein said usage reader is an optical pulse reader.

13. (Original) A system according to Claim 12 wherein the position of said optical pulse reader relative to said meter wheel is adjustable.

14. (Currently amended) A system according to Claim 1 wherein said ~~usage reader has beveled sides~~ said transmitter transfers information wirelessly.

15. (Currently amended) A system according to Claim 1 wherein said transmitter ~~transmits~~ transfers information to the internet.

16. (Currently amended) A method of obtaining information from a meter that measures usage of a commodity utility use comprising

(A) removing said removable cover from said meter; and

(B) installing a system according to Claim 1 on onto said base of said meter.

17. (Currently amended) In an electric power meter that measures the ~~use~~ usage of electric power and has a base and a removable cover, a system that replaces said removable cover comprising

(A) a transparent replacement cover that fits onto said base in the same manner as said removable cover, said replacement cover having a lateral extension;

(B) an optical pulse reader inside said replacement cover directly attached to said cover that obtains information on the amount of said electric power that is used without an electrical or mechanical connection to said meter;

(C) an automatic meter reader inside and attached to said lateral extension,
~~which comprises~~ said automatic meter reader comprising a microprocessor for storing
information and calculating charges and a transmitter for transmitting information to a
remote receiver; and

(D) means for transferring information from said optical pulse reader to said
automatic meter reader.

18. (Currently amended) A method of obtaining information from a meter that
measures electrical power usage comprising

(A) removing said removable cover from said meter; and

(B) installing a system according to Claim 17 on onto said base of said meter.

19. (Currently amended) In an electric power meter that measures the use usage of
electric power and has a base and a removable cover, a system that replaces said
removable cover comprising

(A) a transparent replacement cover that fits onto said base in the same manner
as said removable cover, said replacement cover having a lateral extension that has a
power-receiving plug and a communication plug;

(B) an optical pulse reader inside said replacement cover directly attached to
said replacement cover that obtains information on the amount of said electric power
that is used without an electrical or mechanical connection to said meter;

(C) an automatic meter reader inside and attached to said lateral extension,
~~which comprises~~ said automatic meter reader comprising a microprocessor for storing

information and calculating charges and a transmitter for transmitting information to a remote receiver; and

(D) ~~a wireless connection~~ means for transferring information from said optical pulse reader to said automatic meter reader, whereby said system receives power through said power plug and sends and receives information through said communication plug.

20. (Currently amended) A method of obtaining information from a meter that measures electrical power usage comprising

(A) removing said removable cover from said meter;

(B) installing a system according to Claim 19 on onto said base of said meter;
and

(C) attaching a power line to said power plug and a communication line to said communication plug.